

The Water Connection December 1998

ON THE WATER FRONT



Part of what we all love about the Tucson area is the wonderful environment that we are so fortunate to live in. But to maintain that environment we must protect it. For many years, we have been pumping much more groundwater from beneath our city than is replaced naturally by rainfall and snowmelt. The overdraft of our aquifer began in the 1940s, and our water table has dropped hundreds of feet in the past decades and continues to drop each year. The environmental damage we are doing to our aquifer is great and is not reversible. While there are a number of suggestions about how to solve the problem, the most sensible and most effective is to stop pumping so much groundwater and use all our water resources wisely, including Central Arizona Project water, water conservation, and reclaimed wastewater. Tucson Water is working to ensure our future water supply and protect and enhance our environment. We will be sharing more information about this effort with you soon.

David Modeer
Director, Tucson Water

Tucson Water Rates About Average for Arizona Cities

New Water Rates Begin December 14th

New Water Rates

On November 9, 1998, Tucson's Mayor and Council adopted new water rates for all Tucson Water customers. Residential rates were increased by about 1.4%. The new rates become effective on December 14, 1998.

The City's computerized billing system allows us to charge you the previous rate for all the water you used prior to December 14, and the new rate for water used after that date. Your bill reflects the combined water charges under both rates. Your next bill will be calculated using only the new rates.

Why Did Rates Go Up?

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This small increase is necessary to maintain operations of the utility, and to fund critical capital projects such as water main replacements, additions to our reclaimed water system, and expansion of our Central Arizona Project water recharge projects to help ensure our future water supply.

How Is My Bill Calculated?

Tucson Water measures your water use in units known as Ccf. Each Ccf equals 100 cubic feet of water or 748 gallons. Your bill is calculated by multiplying the number of Ccf you use during a month by the rate charged for each Ccf.

Each month, the cost of your first 3 Ccfs is included in your monthly service charge. The old and new water rates for Tucson Water residential customers are shown below.

	Old Rates	New Rates
	Effective November 28, 1996	Effective December 14, 1998
Monthly Service Charge	\$5.20	\$5.30
0-3 Ccf	No Charge	No Charge
4-15 Ccf	\$1.60	\$1.62
16-30 Ccf	\$2.56	\$2.61
Over 30 Ccf	\$3.20	\$3.29

If you have any questions about your bill, please call our Customer Service Office at 791-3242.

Coliform Bacteria Testing Results

a sufficient level of chlorine to keep the groundwater we use safe for drinking, cooking and bathing.

What's a coliform, anyway?

Coliforms are bacteria which are not harmful themselves but may indicate the presence of other, potentially harmful bacteria.

Why should the chlorine level in my water matter to me?

Chlorine kills bacteria and germs that can grow in drinking water and prevents waterborne disease. Chlorine is the most widely used water disinfectant in North America. Tucson Water continually tests water at more than 240 locations to make sure chlorine levels stay within the target range.

Groundwater Quality Report

September 1998

Water Quality Zone		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	System Wide
Sodium	Average	52	40	51	36	32	32	29	41	47	40	39
	(ppm) Range	28-84	32-48	26-106	27-59	23-42	23-37	20-36	36-46	39-83	40-41	20-106
Mineral Content	Average	385	274	328	232	219	225	218	313	273	217	260
	(ppm) Range	160-545	216-324	184-612	180-402	162-288	180-271	155-273	230-463	213-350	212-221	155-612
Hardness	Average	187	124	144	97	97	106	105	156	108	80	116
	(ppm) Range	63-261	98-151	65-317	66-191	65-134	77-127	74-135	88-288	79-138	79-80	63-317
pH	Average	7.6	8.0	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.4	7.6	7.6
	(units) Range	7.0-8.2	7.9-8.1	6.9-8.1	6.8-8.1	6.9-8.1	7.0-8.2	7.2-8.2	7.0-8.0	6.6-8.0	7.0-8.0	6.6-8.2
Temperature	Average	83	85	84	84	85	83	84	85	86	87	85
	(deg F) Range	77-88	79-88	73-95	81-90	75-93	75-90	79-88	79-91	81-95	84-91	73-95

What does all this mean to me?

Sodium. The American Heart Association recommended standard for daily sodium intake is 3,000 milligrams. In general, the amount of sodium ingested from drinking water is a small part of a person's overall dietary intake. People on severely restricted sodium diets may want to consult their health care provider about sodium levels in their water.

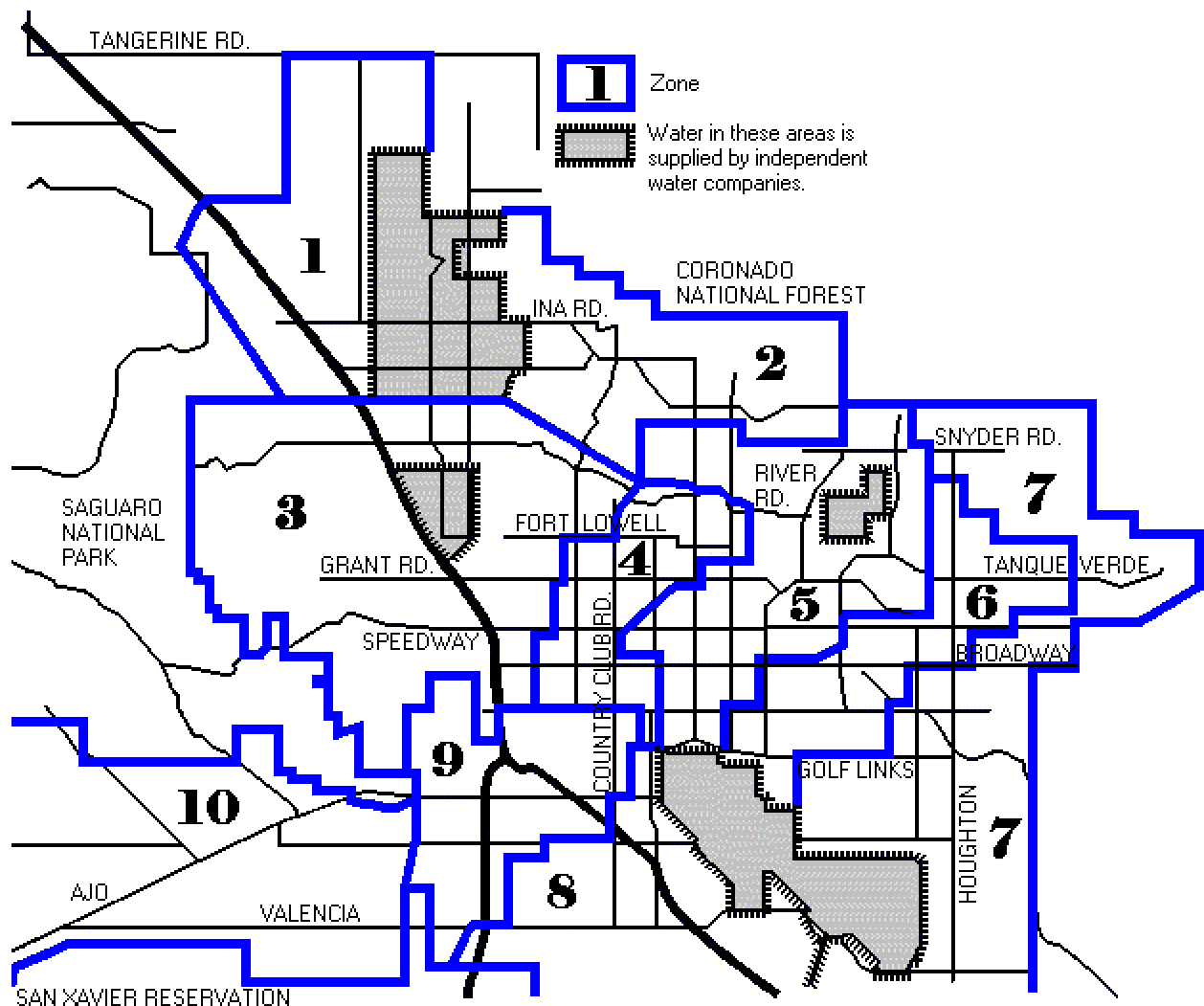
Mineral content measures the amount of total dissolved solids, or **TDS**, in the water.

Mineral content can often affect the taste of the water. For example, many people can detect

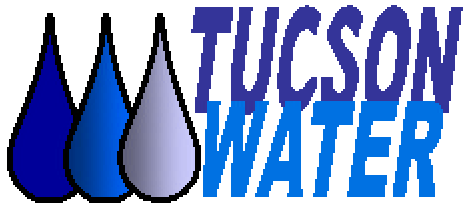
a salty taste when TDS is above 500 parts per million. The federal government has recommended an aesthetic standard of 500 ppm or less for mineral content in drinking water.

Hardness measures the ease with which soap can be lathered. The softer water is, the more easily it produces a soap lather. Water hardness also determines the degree of water spotting on dishes, plumbing fixtures and bath areas. In addition, most home water conditioners are set based on the hardness of the water entering the home. For the most part, Tucson's groundwater is considered moderately hard.

pH. Swimming pool chemistry, some fish aquariums and ponds, and certain water conditioner systems require you to control the pH of the water. pH is a measurement of acidity. Waters with a pH below 7.0 are considered acidic. The federal secondary, or aesthetic, standard for pH is 6.5 to 8.5.



The information shown on this map was collected at 244 sampling points for sodium, hardness, mineral content and pH and 271 sampling points for temperature..



The Water Connection
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To receive a copy, or to receive this
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or mail your request to:
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